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Bashandy

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(54) **SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROTECTION AGAINST EDGE NODE FAILURE**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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(51) **Int. Cl.**

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H04L 12/28	(2006.01)
H04L 12/24	(2006.01)
H04L 12/745	(2013.01)
H04L 12/751	(2013.01)
H04L 12/703	(2013.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***H04L 41/0668*** (2013.01); ***H04L 41/0663*** (2013.01); ***H04L 45/02*** (2013.01); ***H04L 45/28*** (2013.01); ***H04L 45/748*** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

USPC 370/218, 220, 401, 410

See application file for complete search history.

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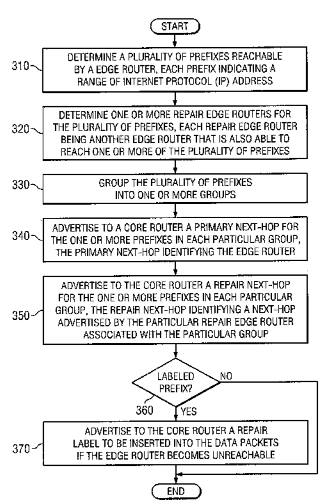
(57) **ABSTRACT**

In one embodiment, a method includes determining, by an edge router, a plurality of prefixes reachable by the edge router, each prefix indicating a range of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses. The method further includes grouping, by the edge router, the plurality of prefixes into one or more groups, wherein each group is associated with a particular repair edge router and the prefixes in each particular group are reachable by both the edge router and the particular repair edge router associated with the particular group. The method further includes communicating instructions, from the edge router to a core router, to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular edge router associated with the particular group if the edge router becomes unreachable.

20 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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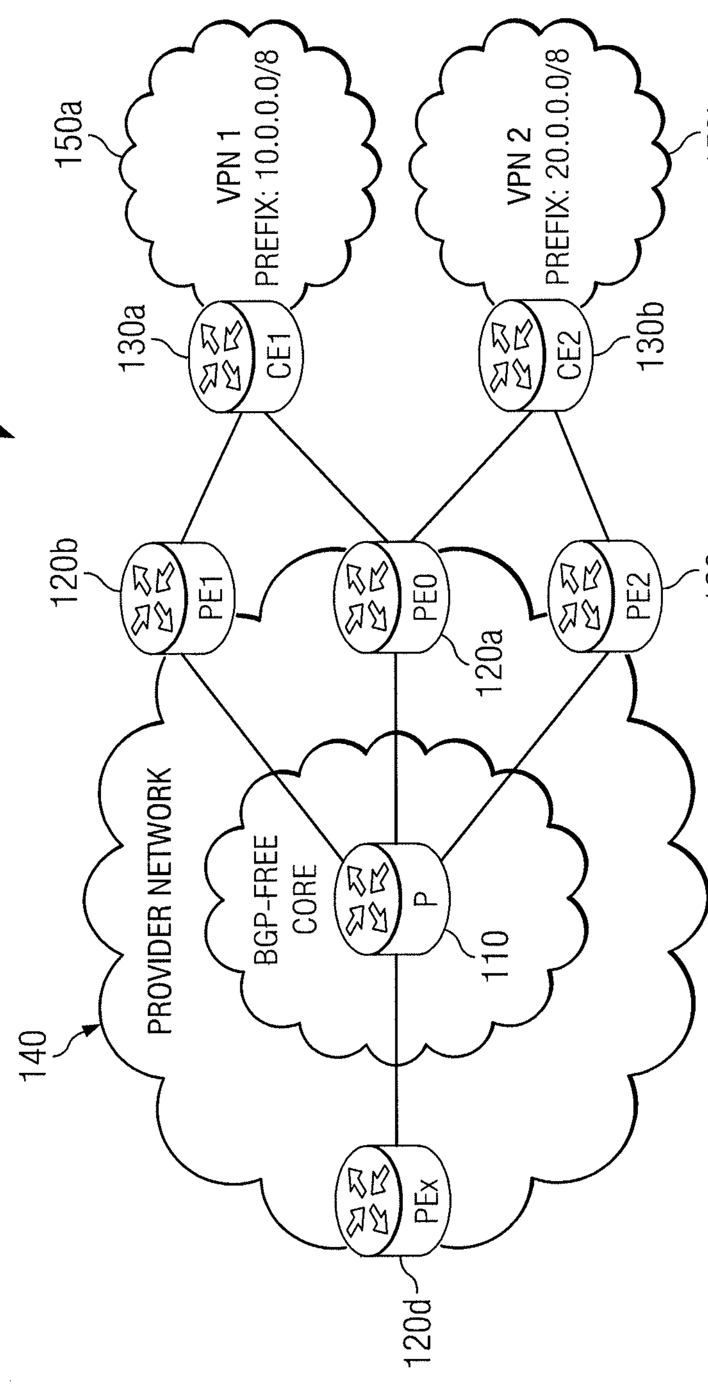
100
VPN 1
PREFIX: 10.0.0.0/8
150a
VPN 2
PREFIX: 20.0.0.0/8
150b
CE1
130a
CE2
130b
PE1
120b
PE0
120a
PE2
120c
PROVIDER NETWORK
140
BGP-FREE
CORE
P
110
PEx
120d

FIG. 1

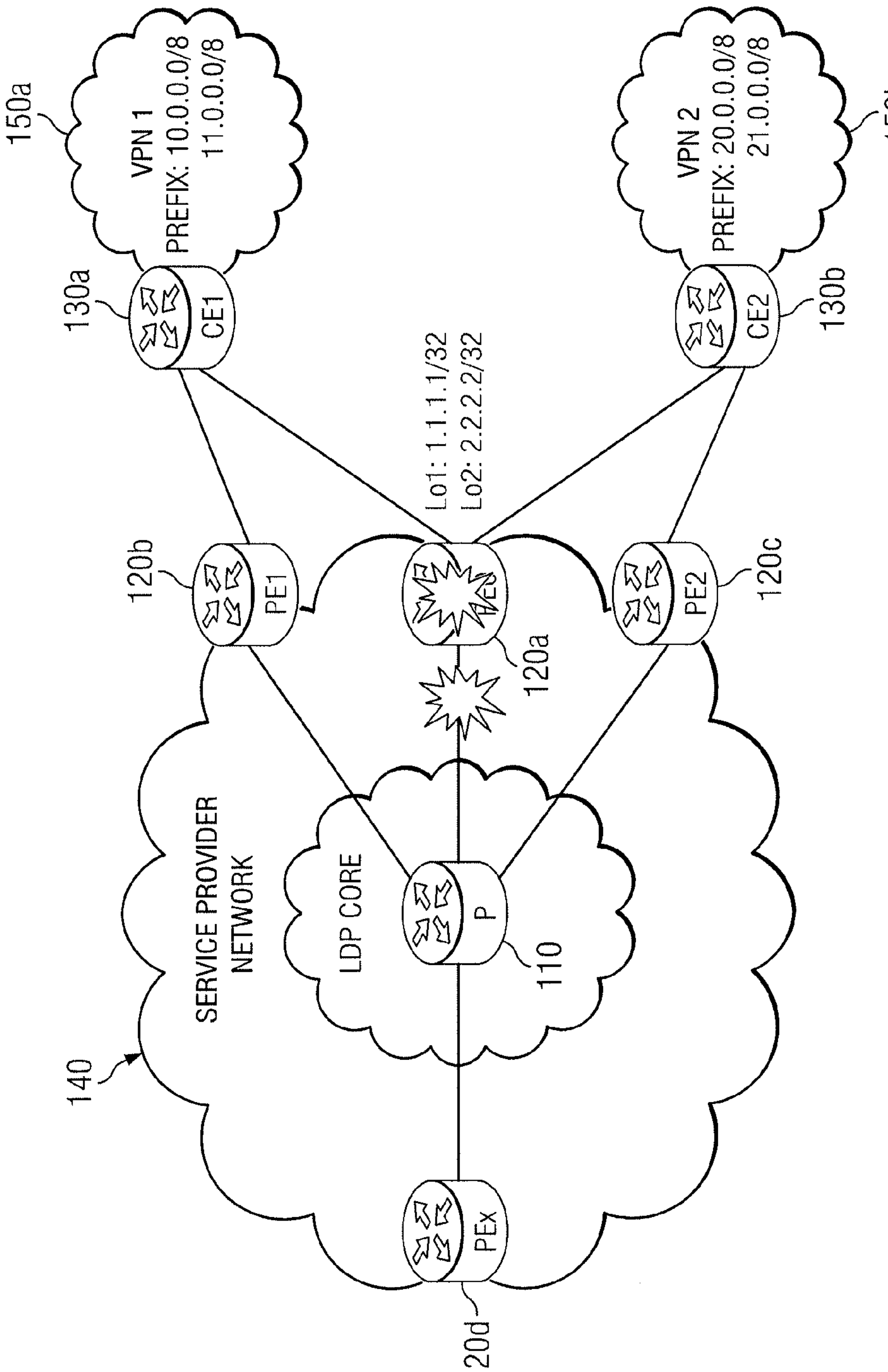
150a
VPN 1
PREFIX: 10.0.0.0/8
11.0.0.0/8
130a
CE1
150b
VPN 2
PREFIX: 20.0.0.0/8
21.0.0.0/8
130b
CE2
Lo1: 1.1.1.1/32
Lo2: 2.2.2.2/32
120b
PE1
120a
PE3
120c
PE2
140
SERVICE PROVIDER
NETWORK
LDP CORE
P
110
PEx
120d

FIG. 2

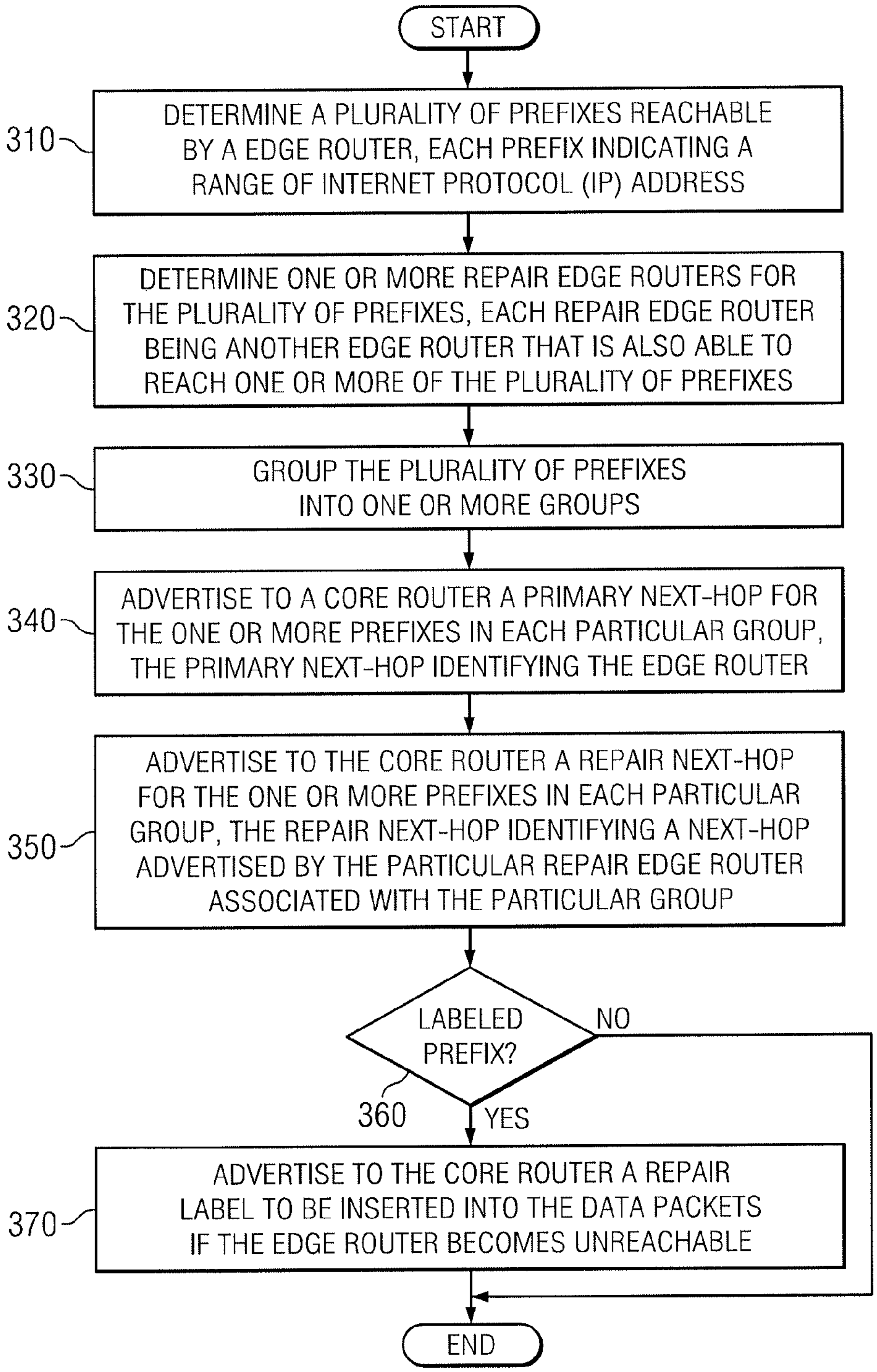
START
310
DETERMINE A PLURALITY OF PREFIXES REACHABLE BY A EDGE ROUTER, EACH PREFIX INDICATING A RANGE OF INTERNET PROTOCOL (IP) ADDRESS
320
DETERMINE ONE OR MORE REPAIR EDGE ROUTERS FOR THE PLURALITY OF PREFIXES, EACH REPAIR EDGE ROUTER BEING ANOTHER EDGE ROUTER THAT IS ALSO ABLE TO REACH ONE OR MORE OF THE PLURALITY OF PREFIXES
330
GROUP THE PLURALITY OF PREFIXES INTO ONE OR MORE GROUPS
340
ADVERTISE TO A CORE ROUTER A PRIMARY NEXT-HOP FOR THE ONE OR MORE PREFIXES IN EACH PARTICULAR GROUP, THE PRIMARY NEXT-HOP IDENTIFYING THE EDGE ROUTER
350
ADVERTISE TO THE CORE ROUTER A REPAIR NEXT-HOP FOR THE ONE OR MORE PREFIXES IN EACH PARTICULAR GROUP, THE REPAIR NEXT-HOP IDENTIFYING A NEXT-HOP ADVERTISED BY THE PARTICULAR REPAIR EDGE ROUTER ASSOCIATED WITH THE PARTICULAR GROUP
LABELED PREFIX?
NO
360
YES
370
ADVERTISE TO THE CORE ROUTER A REPAIR LABEL TO BE INSERTED INTO THE DATA PACKETS IF THE EDGE ROUTER BECOMES UNREACHABLE
END

FIG. 3

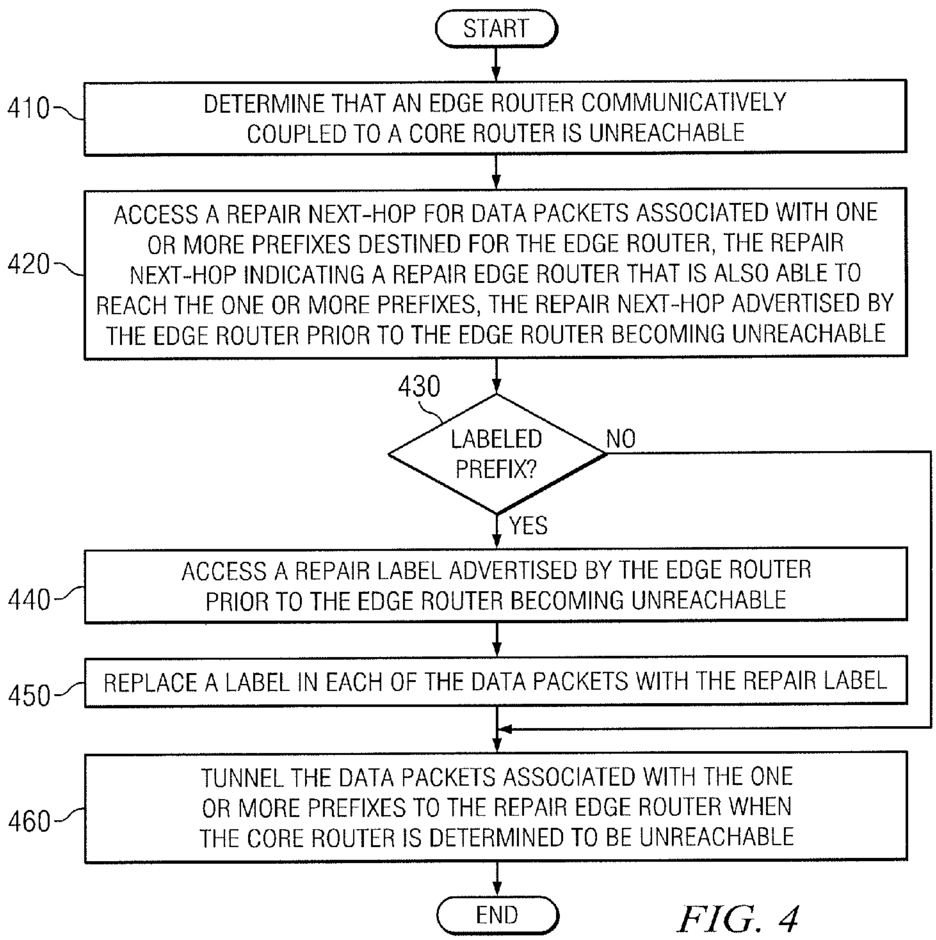
START
410
DETERMINE THAT AN EDGE ROUTER COMMUNICATIVELY COUPLED TO A CORE ROUTER IS UNREACHABLE
420
ACCESS A REPAIR NEXT-HOP FOR DATA PACKETS ASSOCIATED WITH ONE OR MORE PREFIXES DESTINED FOR THE EDGE ROUTER, THE REPAIR NEXT-HOP INDICATING A REPAIR EDGE ROUTER THAT IS ALSO ABLE TO REACH THE ONE OR MORE PREFIXES, THE REPAIR NEXT-HOP ADVERTISED BY THE EDGE ROUTER PRIOR TO THE EDGE ROUTER BECOMING UNREACHABLE
430
LABELED PREFIX?
NO
YES
440
ACCESS A REPAIR LABEL ADVERTISED BY THE EDGE ROUTER PRIOR TO THE EDGE ROUTER BECOMING UNREACHABLE
450
REPLACE A LABEL IN EACH OF THE DATA PACKETS WITH THE REPAIR LABEL
460
TUNNEL THE DATA PACKETS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ONE OR MORE PREFIXES TO THE REPAIR EDGE ROUTER WHEN THE CORE ROUTER IS DETERMINED TO BE UNREACHABLE
END

FIG. 4

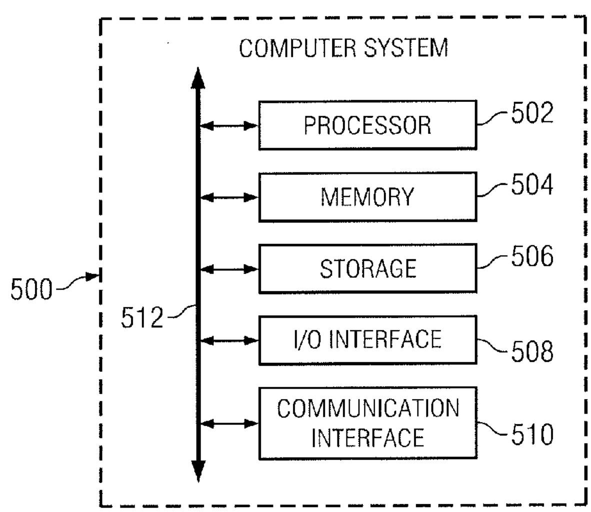
COMPUTER SYSTEM
PROCESSOR
502
MEMORY
504
STORAGE
506
I/O INTERFACE
508
COMMUNICATION INTERFACE
510
500
512

FIG. 5

SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR PROTECTION AGAINST EDGE NODE FAILURE

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 13/533,580 filed Jun. 26, 2012 and entitled "System and Method for Protection Against Edge Node Failure" now U.S. Pat. No. 8,750,095.

TECHNICAL FIELD

This disclosure relates generally to data routing and more particularly to a system and method for protection against edge node failure.

BACKGROUND

In a data network, network devices route data packets to other network devices. For example, a data network may include one or more core routers that carry packets tunneled to or from one or more edge routers. When a particular edge router fails or otherwise becomes unreachable, the core routers must reroute data packets that were originally intended for the failed edge router to another edge router. Typically, this requires either the core routers waiting for routing tables to be updated, or the core routers learning the prefixes that are reachable by each of the edge routers.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** illustrates an example system for providing protection against edge node failure, according to certain embodiments;

FIG. **2** illustrates another example system for providing protection against edge node failure, according to certain embodiments;

FIG. **3** illustrates an example method of providing protection against edge node failure, according to certain embodiments;

FIG. **4** illustrates another example method of providing protection against edge node failure, according to certain embodiments; and

FIG. **5** illustrates an example computer system that may be utilized by the systems and methods of FIGS. **1**-**4** to provide protection against edge node failure, according to certain embodiments.

DESCRIPTION OF EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS

In a data network, network devices route data packets to other network devices. For example, a particular service provider network may include one or more core routers that tunnel data packets to a number of provider edge (PE) routers. Each of the PE routers may be communicatively coupled to one or more customer edge (CE) routers and may be able to reach a number of prefixes associated with the CE routers. When a particular PE router fails or otherwise becomes unreachable (e.g. the link between the PE router and the core router fails, the PE router crashes, the PE router is powered off, etc.), the core routers reroute data packets that were originally intended for the failed PE router to another PE router.

Typical solutions of rerouting data packets by core routers around a failed PE router are inefficient and undesirable. For example, some core routers wait for routing tables to be updated after Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) or Interior Gateway Protocol (IGP) re-converges. This is both inefficient and slow. In another example, some core routers learn all of the prefixes that are reachable by each of the PE routers that are communicatively coupled to the core router. This may become costly and difficult to maintain as the number of prefixes in the network increase because the routing table maintained by the core router is dependent on the number of prefixes in the network.

The teachings of the disclosure recognize that it would be desirable to provide protection against edge node failure without waiting for IGP or BGP to re-converge, without having to maintain routing tables on a core router that are dependent on the number of prefixes in the network, or without any of the other inefficiencies of existing network devices. The following describes a system and method for protection against edge node failure, according to certain embodiments.

FIG. **1** illustrates an example system **100** for providing protection against edge node failure. In particular embodiments, system **100** includes a core router **110**, PE routers **120***a*-**120***d*, CE routers **130***a*-**130***b*, a service provider network **140**, and virtual private networks (VPNs) **150***a*-**150***b*. Core router **110** is communicatively coupled to PE routers **120** within service provider network **140**. PE routers **120** are communicatively coupled to certain CE routers **130** as illustrated. Each CE router **130** resides in a respective VPN **150** as illustrated. While system **100** is illustrated as including one core router **110** and various numbers of PE routers **120** and CE routers **130**, the disclosure anticipates any appropriate number and configuration of core routers **110**, PE routers **120**, and CE routers **130**.

In general, system **100** provides protection against failure of PE routers **120**. As described in more detail below, a particular PE router **120**, such as PE router **120***a*, determines a plurality of prefixes (i.e., a range of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses) that it is able to reach. For example, PE routers **120***a* may be able to reach prefixes that are associated with both CE router **130***a* and CE router **130***b*. PE router **120***a* may determine one of the other PE routers **120** (e.g., PE router **120***b* and/or PE router **120***c*) that may serve as a repair PE router in the event that PE router **120***a* becomes unreachable. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* may group the prefixes that it is able to reach into one or more groups. For example, if both PE router **120***a* and PE router **120***b* are able to reach a first set of prefixes that are associated with CE router **130***a*, those prefixes may be placed into a first group. Likewise, if both PE router **120***a* and PE router **120***c* are able to reach a second set of prefixes that are associated with CE router **130***b*, those prefixes may be placed into a second group. PE router **120***a* may inform core router **110** that in the event that PE router **120***a* becomes unreachable, data packets associated with prefixes in the first group should be routed through PE router **120***b* and data packets associated with prefixes in the second group should be routed through PE router **120***c*. PE router **120***a* informs core router **110** by advertising a next-hop pair that includes: 1) a next-hop, and 2) a repair next-hop that identifies the appropriate repair PE router (e.g., PE router **120***b* or **120***c*). In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* additionally advertises a repair label to be inserted by core router **110** into data packets that are rerouted through a repair PE router when PE router **120***a* becomes unreachable. When core router **110** determines that PE router **120***a* has become unreachable, it uses the information advertised by PE router **120***a* before it became unreachable to route traffic originally destined for PE router **120***a* to another PE router **120** (e.g., a repair PE router **120**).

Core router **110** is any appropriate network device that tunnels traffic to PE routers **120**. PE routers **120** and CE routers **130** are any appropriate network devices that route data packets. CE routers **130** are routers through which an egress PE router **120** can reach a prefix. In some embodiments, PE routers **120** and CE routers **130** utilize Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) protocol. In some embodiments, core router **110** is a BGP-free core (i.e., BGP prefixes are only known to the PE routers **120** (core router **110** is unaware of all of the prefixes reachable by PE routers **120**), and traffic is tunneled between PE routers **120**). In a BGP-free core, where traffic is tunneled between edge routers, BGP speakers advertise reachability information about prefixes to other BGP speakers. For labeled address families, namely AFI/SAFI 1/4, 2/4, 1/128, and 2/128, an edge router (i.e., PE router **120**) assigns local labels to prefixes and associates the local label with each advertised prefix such as L3VPN, 6PE, SOFTWIRE, and the like. Suppose that a given edge router is chosen as the best next-hop for a prefix "P/p." An ingress router (e.g., PE router **120***d*) that receives a packet from an external router and destined for prefix P/p "tunnels" the packet across the core to the appropriate PE router **120***a-c*. If the prefix P/p is a labeled prefix, the ingress router pushes the label advertised by the egress router (e.g., PE router **120***a*) before tunneling the packet to the egress router. Upon receiving the packet from core router **110**, the egress router takes the appropriate forwarding decision based on the content of the packet or the label pushed on the packet.

In modern networks, it is not uncommon to have a prefix reachable via multiple edge routers. One example is the best external path. Another more common and widely deployed scenario is L3VPN with multi-homed VPN sites. As an example, consider the L3VPN example embodiment depicted in FIG. **1**. In this embodiment, PE router **120***a* is the primary next hop (NH) for both 10.0.0.0/8 and 20.0.0.0/8 prefixes. At the same time, both 10.0.0.0/8 and 20.0.0.0/8 are reachable through PE router **120***b* and PE router **120***c*, respectively.

In certain embodiments, network **140** and VPNs **150** may refer to any interconnecting system capable of transmitting audio, video, signals, data, messages, or any combination of the preceding. Network **140** and VPNs **150** may include all or a portion of a public switched telephone network (PSTN), a public or private data network, a local area network (LAN), a metropolitan area network (MAN), a wide area network (WAN), a local, regional, or global communication or computer network such as the Internet, a wireline or wireless network, an enterprise intranet, or any other suitable communication link, including combinations thereof.

FIG. **2** illustrates an example embodiment of FIG. **1** where core router **110** loses connectivity to PE router **120***a*. Upon losing connectivity to PE router **120***a*, core router **110** needs to redirect traffic towards the correct backup edge router (i.e., the correct repair PE router **120**). For example, on the failure of PE router **120***a* as illustrated in FIG. **2**, core router **110** must reroute traffic for 10.0.0.0/8 towards PE router **120***b* and traffic for 20.0.0.0/8 towards PE router **120***c*. Rather than waiting for IGP or BGP to re-converge and update routing tables, as is the case for typical solutions, embodiment of the disclosure accomplish the rerouting of traffic by utilizing information advertised by PE router **120***a* before it becomes unreachable. Further details of the actions performed by core router **110** and PE router **120***a* to reroute traffic around an unreachable PE router **120***a* are discussed below.

In operation of example embodiments for unlabeled prefixes, a particular PE router **120** such as PE router **120***a* determines the prefixes that it is able to reach. In the example embodiments of FIGS. **1** and **2**, PE router **120***a* may determine that it is able to reach prefix 10.0.0.0/8 associated with CE router **130***a* and prefix 20.0.0.0/8 associated with CE router **130***b*. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* learns the prefixes that it is able to reach via an external neighbor. In some embodiments, the edge routers advertise the prefix P/p to some or all of its IBGP peers.

In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* chooses a repair PE router **120** for the external prefixes P/p that it is able to reach. In certain embodiments, a repair PE router **120** is another PE router **120** that advertises the same prefix to PE router **120***a* via IBGP peering. For example, if PE router **120***b* advertises the prefix 10.0.0.0/8 to PE router **120***a*, PE router **120***a* may choose PE router **120***b* as a repair PE router for prefix 10.0.0.0/8. Likewise, if PE router **120***c* advertises the prefix 20.0.0.0/8 to PE router **120***a*, PE router **120***a* may choose PE router **120***c* as a repair PE router for prefix 20.0.0.0/8.

In certain embodiments, PE router **120***a* groups the prefixes that it is able to reach into one or more groups based on the determined repair PE router **120** for each prefix. For example, prefixes having PE router **120***b* as their repair PE router may be placed in a first group. Likewise, prefixes having PE router **120***c* as their repair PE router may be placed in a second group. For each group, PE router **120***a* assigns a local next-hop. Thus if a prefix P/p belongs to a particular group Gi, its primary next-hop is NHi. For example, PE router **120***a* assigns a different loopback interface address as the next-hop for each of the groups of prefixes. When advertising the prefix and its primary next-hop to its internal BGP (IBGP) peers, PE router **120***a* uses NHi as the next-hop attribute of prefixes belonging to the group Gi.

Once repair PE routers are established for the prefixes, PE router **120***a* advertises a next-hop pair to the core (e.g., core router **110**) using IGP. The next-hop pair may include the primary next-hop, denoted NHi, and a repair next-hop, denoted rNHi. The repair next-hop is the next-hop attribute advertised for the prefix P/p by the repair PE router **120** that is protecting the prefix. Because rNHi is the next-hop advertised by the repair PE router, rNHi will also be known to all core routers **110** via IGP. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* advertises the pair (NHi, rNHi) to all directly connected core routers **110**. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* advertises the pair (NHi, rNHi) to all core routers **110** in service provider network **140**. In certain embodiments, the next-hop pair (NHi, rNHi) may be advertised through an intermediate system to intermediate system (ISIS) optional type, length, and value (TLV). The semantics of the pair (NHi, rNHi) are: if the next-hop NHi becomes unreachable, then traffic destined to the next-hop NHi should be re-tunneled to the next-hop rNHi because rNHi can reach prefixes reachable via the primary next-hop NHi. Because of the advertising of the (NHi, rNHi) pair, core routers **110** that are directly coupled to the egress PE router **120** (and possibly other core routers **110**) are aware of the repair next-hop for protected BGP prefixes reachable via the egress PE router **120** while remaining unaware of the BGP prefixes. This reduces the cost and complexity of core routers **110**.

In operation of example embodiments for labeled prefixes, a particular PE router **120** such as PE router **120***a* determines the prefixes that it is able to reach. In the example embodiments of FIGS. **1** and **2**, PE router **120***a* may determine that it is able to reach prefix 10.0.0.0/8 associated with CE router **130***a* and prefix 20.0.0.0/8 associated with CE router **130***b*. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* learns the prefixes that it is able to reach via an external neighbor. PE router **120***a* then allocates a local label for each prefix it can reach through an external neighbor CE router **130**. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* advertises the prefix P/p together with the local label to some or all of its IBGP peers. In certain embodiments, PE router **120***a* additionally advertises a repair label to some or all of its IBGP peers.

In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* chooses a repair PE router **120** for the external prefixes P/p that it is able to reach. In certain embodiments, a repair PE router **120** is another PE router **120** that advertises the same prefix to PE router **120***a* via IBGP peering. For example, if PE router **120***b* advertises the prefix 10.0.0.0/8 to PE router **120***a*, PE router **120***a* may choose PE router **120***b* as a repair PE router for prefix 10.0.0.0/8. Likewise, if PE router **120***c* advertises the prefix 20.0.0.0/8 to PE router **120***a*, PE router **120***a* may choose PE router **120***c* as a repair PE router for prefix 20.0.0.0/8. In certain embodiments, PE router **120***a* may choose a label advertised by a repair PE router as the repair label for the prefixes protected by the repair label. For example, PE router **120***a* may choose the label advertised by PE router **120***b* as the repair label for the prefix 10.0.0.0/8 because PE router **120***b* was chosen as the repair PE router for the prefix 10.0.0.0/8.

In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* chooses a repair PE router **120** for the external prefix only if the repair label advertised for the prefix P/p by the repair PE router **120** is allocated on per-VPN or per-CE/per-next-hop basis. This is because it is desirable for core router **110** to remain BGP-free and the size of the routing table on core router **110** to remain independent of the number of BGP prefixes. If the repair label is allocated on a per-prefix basis, then this results in having the routing table on the core router comparable to the number of BGP prefixes because of the following. BGP prefix grouping discussed above requires two prefixes to belong to two different groups if the labels advertised by the repair PE for the two prefixes are different. Thus if the repair PE router allocates labels on a per-prefix basis, protected PE router **120***a* will advertise a different primary next-hop for each protected prefix (i.e., a prefix P/p that a BGP speaker has an external path to; the BGP speaker may learn about the prefix from an external peer through BGP, some other protocol, or manual configuration and the protected prefix is advertised to some or all the internal peers.) This is equivalent to having core router **110** knowing about every BGP prefix, which is undesirable. In addition the size of the routing table of core router **110** becomes comparable to the number of BGP prefixes, which is also undesirable.

PE router **120***a* groups the prefixes that it is able to reach into one or more groups based on the determined repair PE router **120** and repair label for each prefix. For example, prefixes having PE router **120***b* as their repair PE router and having the repair label of PE router **120***b* as their repair label may be placed in a first group. Likewise, prefixes having PE router **120***c* as their repair PE router and having the repair label of PE router **120***c* as their repair label may be placed in a second group. For each group, PE router **120***a* assigns a primary next-hop, NHi, and a repair path that includes a repair next-hop and the repair label. Thus if a prefix P/p belongs to group a particular group Gi, its primary next-hop is NHi. For example, PE router **120***a* assigns a different loopback interface address as the next-hop for each of the groups of prefixes. When advertising the prefix and its primary next-hop to its IBGP peers, PE router **120***a* uses NHi as the next-hop attribute of prefixes belonging to the group Gi.

Once repair PE routers are established for the prefixes, PE router **120***a* informs core router **110** about the repair path. It does this by advertising a next-hop triplet to the core (e.g., core router **110**) using IGP. The next-hop triplet may include the primary next-hop, NHi, a repair next-hop, rNHi, and a repair label, rLi. The repair next-hop, rNHi, is the next-hop attribute advertised for the prefix P/p by the repair PE router **120** that is protecting the prefix. Because rNHi is the next-hop advertised by the repair PE router, rNHi will also be known to all core routers **110** via IGP. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* advertises the triplet (NHi, rNHi, rLi) to all directly connected core routers **110**. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* advertises the triplet (NHi, rNHi, rLi) to all core routers **110** in service provider network **140**. In certain embodiments, the next-hop triplet (NHi, rNHi, rLi) may be advertised through any appropriate means such as ISIS optional TLV. The semantics of the triplet (NHi, rNHi, rLi) are: if the next-hop NHi becomes unreachable, then traffic destined to the next-hop NHi should be re-tunneled to the next-hop rNHi and the label pushed by the ingress PE (i.e., a BGP speaker that learns about a prefix through another IBGP peer and chooses that IBGP peer as the next-hop for the prefix) is swapped with the label rLi irrespective of the value of the label pushed by the ingress PE. Because of the advertising of the (NHi, rNHi, rLi) triplet, core routers **110** that are directly coupled to the egress PE router **120** (and possibly other core routers **110**) are aware of the repair next-hop for protected BGP prefixes reachable via the egress PE router **120** while remaining unaware of the BGP prefixes. This reduces the cost and complexity of core routers **110**.

Core router **110** includes a forwarding plane that is programmed with instructions that are used to route incoming data packets to their appropriate destination. Through a typical IGP mechanism, core router **110** has a prefix matching every BGP next-hop. Let the next-hop NHi match the route Ri. Thus the forwarding information base (FIB) entry for Ri is programmed as follows for unlabeled prefixes: the primary next-hop is the next router on the path towards NHi, and the repair next-hop is the next-router on the path towards rNHi. For labeled prefixes, the next-hop of prefix Ri is on the path towards the protected egress PE router, and the next-hop of the prefix Ri is considered the primary path for the prefix Ri. The FIB for labeled prefixes is programmed as follow: the primary path is the next router on the path towards NHi, and for the repair path, pop label in the packet right under the tunnel header (irrespective of the value of that label), push the repair label rLi, and re-tunnel the packet towards the repair next-hop rNHi.

Once core router **110** detects that the primary next-hop for Ri (e.g., PE router **120***a*) is not reachable, it does the following for packets destined for the protected edge router. For unlabeled prefixes, core router **110** de-capsulates the tunnel header of the arriving packet and then tunnels the packet towards the repair egress PE router identified by the repair next-hop rNHj. For labeled prefixes, core router **110** de-capsulates the tunnel header to expose the labeled packet, swaps the label on the top of the packet (irrespective of the value of that label) with the repair label rLi, and then tunnels the packet towards the repair egress PE router identified by rNHj.

As an example for illustrative purposes only, consider the system of FIG. **2**, which illustrates an example system **100** where PE router **120***a* becomes unreachable. In this example, the core is a Label Distribution Protocol (LDP) core. In addition, PE routers **120** advertise repair labels as follows. Each PE router **120** allocates a local label for each prefix it can reach through an external neighbor CE. This is the primary label used for normal traffic forwarding. To provide repair path information to all PE router **120**, each PE router **120** also allocates a repair label to the prefix if it can reach that prefix via an external neighbor. PE router **120** allocates a single repair label for all prefixes that are reachable via a single external neighbor. Each PE **120** advertises both the primary and repair labels to its IBGP peers. When a PE router **120** receives the label advertisement from egress PE routers **120**, it calculates a primary egress PE router **120** and a repair egress PE router **120** based on its internal path selection criteria. In the end, for some of the prefixes advertised by more than one PE router **120**, a particular PE router **120** will have a primary path and a repair path consisting of a repair PE router **120** and a repair label advertised by the chosen repair PE router **120**. In some embodiments, PE routers **120** do not protect a repair label. Thus, on any PE router **120**, a repair label only has paths towards the CE. However a primary label may have a repair path towards a chosen repair PE router **120**. Additional rules for allocating and advertising a repair label may include: a repair PE router **120** does not advertise a repair label for a prefix if it does not have an external path to the prefix, a repair PE router **120** does not associate an internal path with a repair label, and repair labels are advertised with labeled address families such as AFI/SAFI 1/4, 2/4, 1/128, and 2/128.

Continuing with the example embodiment of FIGURE and 2, PE router **120***a* is able to reach four prefixes: 10.0.0.0/8, 11.0.0.0/8, 20.0.0.0/8, and 21.0.0.0/8. PE router **120***a* may assign a separate label to each prefix. Any appropriate method and policy of assigning primary labels to each prefixes may be utilized. PE router **120***b* advertises the repair label rL**1** for prefixes 10.0.0.0/8 and 11.0.0.0/8, and PE router **120***c* advertises the repair label rL**2** for prefixes 20.0.0.0/8 and 21.0.0.0/8. PE router **120***a* divides its prefixes into two groups: G**1**={10.0.0.0/8, 11.0.0.0/8}, and G**2**={20.0.0.0/8, 21.0.0.0/8}.

When advertising the next-hop to its IBGP peer, PE router **120***a* advertises 1.1.1.1 as the next-hop for prefixes belonging to group G**1** and 2.2.2.2 as the next-hop for prefixes belonging to group G**2**. PE router **120***a* advertises the prefixes 1.1.1.1/32 and 2.2.2.2/32 using the usual IGP mechanism. When advertising 1.1.1.1/32 into the core, PE router **120***a* advertises rL**1** and PE router **120***b* as a repair path. When advertising 2.2.2.2/32 into the core, PE router **120***a* advertises rL**2** and PE router **120***c* as a repair path. Any appropriate mechanism by which a repair path is advertised may be utilized.

On the penultimate hop router **110**, LDP assigns a different LDP label to 1.1.1.1/32 and 2.2.2.2/32. Core routers other than penultimate hop routers may employ some sort of label aggregation to reduce the number of LDP labels. Assume that the penultimate hop router **110** assigns the local LDP label L**1** for prefix 1.1.1.1/32 and L**2** for prefix 2.2.2.2/32. On the penultimate router **110**, the forwarding entry for L**1** will be as follows. For the primary path: nexthop is PE router **120***a*; swap the incoming outer label with the LDP label towards 1.1.1.1. For the repair path: pop the incoming LDP label; swap the internal label with the repair label rL**1**; push the LDP label towards PE router **120***b*; and forward the packet.

On the core router **110**, the forwarding entry for L**2** will be as follows. For the primary path: same as L**1** above. For the repair path: pop the incoming LDP label; swap the internal label with the repair label rL**2**; push the LDP label towards PE router **120***c*; and forward the packet.

If core router **110** detects that PE router **120***a* is no longer reachable, it can use the repair path already pre-programmed in the forwarding plane as described above. Because the repair path is pre-programmed as in the case of traffic engineering (TE) and IP Fast ReRoute (FRR), core router **110** can re-route traffic very fast, without waiting for IGP or BGP to reconverge.

FIG. **3** illustrates an example method that may be performed by a particular PE router **120** for providing protection against edge node failure. The method may start at step **310**, where a plurality of prefixes that are reachable by an edge router are determined. For example, as illustrated in the example embodiment of FIG. **2** above, PE router **120***a* may determine that it is able to reach prefixes 10.0.0.0/8 and 11.0.0.0/8 that are associated with CE router **130***a*, and prefixes 20.0.0.0/8 and 21.0.0.0/8 that are associated with CE router **130***a*.

At step **320**, one or more repair edge routers for the plurality of prefixes of step **310** may be determined. In some embodiments, each repair edge router is another edge router that is also able to reach one or more of the plurality of prefixes of step **310**. In the embodiment of FIG. **2**, for example, PE router **120***a* may determine that PE router **120***b* is an appropriate repair edge router for prefixes 10.0.0.0/8 and 11.0.0.0/8, and that PE router **120***c* is an appropriate repair edge router for prefixes 20.0.0.0/8 and 21.0.0.0/8. In some embodiments, PE router **120***a* may determine that a particular PE router **120** is an appropriate repair edge router for a particular prefix if the particular PE router **120** advertises the particular prefix to PE router **120***a*.

At step **330**, the plurality of prefixes of step **310** are grouped into one or more groups. In some embodiments, all of the prefixes in each particular group are reachable by both the PE router and the particular repair PE router associated with the particular group. In certain embodiments, each group is associated with a particular repair PE router **120**. In the embodiment of FIG. **2**, for example, PE router **120***a* groups prefixes 10.0.0.0/8 and 11.0.0.0/8 into a first group because they are reachable by both PE router **120***a* and PE router **120***b*. Likewise, PE router **120***a* may group prefixes 20.0.0.0/8 and 21.0.0.0/8 into a second group because they are reachable by both PE router **120***a* and PE router **120***c*.

At steps **340**, **350**, and **370**, instructions are communicated to a core router to send data packets associated with all of the prefixes in each particular group of step **330** to the particular PE router associated with the particular group if the PE router becomes unreachable. In step **340**, some embodiments advertise, by the PE router to the core router, a primary next-hop for the prefixes in each particular group. In step **350**, some embodiments advertise, by the PE router to the core router, a repair next-hop for the prefixes in each particular group. In certain embodiments, the repair next-hop identifies a next-hop advertised by the particular repair PE router associated with the particular group.

At step **360**, it is determined whether the prefixes of step **310** are labeled prefixes. If it is determined that the prefixes are labeled prefixes, some embodiments proceed to step **370** where a repair label that is to be inserted into data packets is advertised to the core router. If it is determined that the prefixes are not labeled prefixes, the method of FIG. **3** may end. While steps **340**, **350**, ad **370** are listed as independent steps, it should be understood that embodiments of the disclosure advertise the appropriate information from these steps in a combined manner.

FIG. **4** illustrates an example method that is performed by a particular core router **110** for providing protection against edge node failure. The method starts at step **410**, where it is determined that an edge router communicatively coupled to a core router is unreachable. For example, the edge router may become unreachable when it crashes, loses power, loses connectivity, when a link between the core router and the edge routers goes down, or any other situation in which the edge router becomes unreachable by the core router. Step **410** may include any appropriate method of determining that the edge node has become unreachable. For example, the core router may determine that the edge router is unreachable when it does not receive a response from the edge node, when another edge node informs the core router that the edge node is unreachable, or any other appropriate method. In certain embodiments, the edge router may refer to any PE router **120** and the core router may refer to core router **110** discussed above.

At step **420**, a repair next-hop for data packets associated with one or more prefixes destined for the edge router is accessed. For example, the repair next-hop may be stored in memory accessible to the core router. The repair next-hop indicates a repair edge router that is also able to reach the one or more prefixes. The repair next-hop is advertised by the edge router prior to the edge router becoming unreachable. In some embodiments, the repair next-hop refers to rNHi described above. In certain embodiments, the repair next-hop may refer to any PE router **120** described above.

At step **430**, it is determined whether the prefixes of step **420** are labeled prefixes. If it is determined that the prefixes are not labeled prefixes, the method of FIG. **4** proceeds to step **460** below. If it is determined that the prefixes are labeled prefixes, the method of FIG. **4** proceeds to step **440** where a repair label that is to be inserted into data packets is accessed. The accessed repair label is advertised by the edge router prior to the edge router becoming unreachable. The repair label refers to repair label rLi described above.

At step **450**, a label in data packets originally destined for the edge router that has become unreachable are replaced with the repair label of step **430**. The core router swaps the label previously advertised by the unreachable edge router with the label advertised by the backup edge router. For example, the core router de-capsulates the tunnel header of each data packet to expose the labeled packet and swaps the label on the top of the packet (irrespective of the value of that label) with the repair label rLi accessed in step **440**.

At step **460**, the data packets associated with the one or more prefixes are tunneled to the repair edge router when the primary edge router is determined to be unreachable. In some embodiments, for example, the core router tunnels data packet towards the repair egress PE router identified by rNHj when the edge router of step **410** becomes unreachable. After step **460**, the method of FIG. **4** may end.

Although this disclosure describes and illustrates particular steps of the methods of FIGS. **3** and **4** as occurring in a particular order, this disclosure contemplates any suitable steps of the methods of FIGS. **3** and **4** occurring in any suitable order. Moreover, although this disclosure describes and illustrates particular components carrying out particular steps of the methods of FIGS. **3** and **4**, this disclosure contemplates any suitable combination of any suitable components carrying out any suitable steps of the methods of FIGS. **3** and **4**.

FIG. **5** illustrates an example computer system **500**. In particular embodiments, one or more computer systems **500** perform one or more steps of one or more methods described or illustrated herein. In particular embodiments, one or more computer systems **500** provide functionality described or illustrated herein. In particular embodiments, software running on one or more computer systems **500** performs one or more steps of one or more methods described or illustrated herein or provides functionality described or illustrated herein. Particular embodiments include one or more portions of one or more computer systems **500**.

This disclosure contemplates any suitable number of computer systems **500**. This disclosure contemplates computer system **500** taking any suitable physical form. As example and not by way of limitation, computer system **500** may be an embedded computer system, a system-on-chip (SOC), a single-board computer system (SBC) (e.g., a computer-on-module (COM) or system-on-module (SOM)), a desktop computer system, a laptop or notebook computer system, an interactive kiosk, a mainframe, a mesh of computer systems, a mobile telephone, a personal digital assistant (PDA), a server, or a combination of two or more of these. Where appropriate, computer system **500** may include one or more computer systems **500**; be unitary or distributed; span multiple locations; span multiple machines; or reside in a cloud, which may include one or more cloud components in one or more networks. Where appropriate, one or more computer systems **500** may perform without substantial spatial or temporal limitation one or more steps of one or more methods described or illustrated herein. As an example and not by way of limitation, one or more computer systems **500** may perform in real time or in batch mode one or more steps of one or more methods described or illustrated herein. One or more computer systems **500** may perform at different times or at different locations one or more steps of one or more methods described or illustrated herein, where appropriate.

In particular embodiments, computer system **500** includes a processor **502**, memory **504**, storage **506**, an input/output (I/O) interface **508**, a communication interface **510**, and a bus **512**. Although this disclosure describes and illustrates a particular computer system having a particular number of particular components in a particular arrangement, this disclosure contemplates any suitable computer system having any suitable number of any suitable components in any suitable arrangement.

In particular embodiments, processor **502** includes hardware for executing instructions, such as those making up a computer program. As an example and not by way of limitation, to execute instructions, processor **502** may retrieve (or fetch) the instructions from an internal register, an internal cache, memory **504**, or storage **506**; decode and execute them; and then write one or more results to an internal register, an internal cache, memory **504**, or storage **506**. In particular embodiments, processor **502** may include one or more internal caches for data, instructions, or addresses. This disclosure contemplates processor **502** including any suitable number of any suitable internal caches, where appropriate. As an example and not by way of limitation, processor **502** may include one or more instruction caches, one or more data caches, and one or more translation lookaside buffers (TLBs). Instructions in the instruction caches may be copies of instructions in memory **504** or storage **506**, and the instruction caches may speed up retrieval of those instructions by processor **502**. Data in the data caches may be copies of data in memory **504** or storage **506** for instructions executing at processor **502** to operate on; the results of previous instructions executed at processor **502** for access by subsequent instructions executing at processor **502** or for writing to memory **504** or storage **506**; or other suitable data. The data caches may speed up read or write operations by processor **502**. The TLBs may speed up virtual-address translation for processor **502**. In particular embodiments, processor **502** may include one or more internal registers for data, instructions, or addresses. This disclosure contemplates processor **502** including any suitable number of any suitable internal registers, where appropriate. Where appropriate, processor **502** may include one or more arithmetic logic units (ALUs); be a multi-core processor; or include one or more processors **502**. Although this disclosure describes and illustrates a particular processor, this disclosure contemplates any suitable processor.

In particular embodiments, memory **504** includes main memory for storing instructions for processor **502** to execute or data for processor **502** to operate on. As an example and not by way of limitation, computer system **500** may load instructions from storage **506** or another source (e.g., another computer system **500**) to memory **504**. Processor **502** may then load the instructions from memory **504** to an internal register or internal cache. To execute the instructions, processor **502** may retrieve the instructions from the internal register or internal cache and decode them. During or after execution of the instructions, processor **502** may write one or more results (which may be intermediate or final results) to the internal register or internal cache. Processor **502** may then write one or more of those results to memory **504**. In particular embodiments, processor **502** executes only instructions in one or more internal registers or internal caches or in memory **504** (as opposed to storage **506** or elsewhere) and operates only on data in one or more internal registers or internal caches or in memory **504** (as opposed to storage **506** or elsewhere). One or more memory buses (which may each include an address bus and a data bus) may couple processor **502** to memory **504**. Bus **512** may include one or more memory buses, as described below. In particular embodiments, one or more memory management units (MMUs) reside between processor **502** and memory **504** and facilitate accesses to memory **504** requested by processor **502**. In particular embodiments, memory **504** includes random access memory (RAM). This RAM may be volatile memory, where appropriate Where appropriate, this RAM may be dynamic RAM (DRAM) or static RAM (SRAM). Moreover, where appropriate, this RAM may be single-ported or multi-ported RAM. This disclosure contemplates any suitable RAM. Memory **504** may include one or more memories **504**, where appropriate. Although this disclosure describes and illustrates particular memory, this disclosure contemplates any suitable memory.

In particular embodiments, storage **506** includes mass storage for data or instructions. As an example and not by way of limitation, storage **506** may include an HDD, a floppy disk drive, flash memory, an optical disc, a magneto-optical disc, magnetic tape, or a Universal Serial Bus (USB) drive or a combination of two or more of these. Storage **506** may include removable or non-removable (or fixed) media, where appropriate. Storage **506** may be internal or external to computer system **500**, where appropriate. In particular embodiments, storage **506** is non-volatile, solid-state memory. In particular embodiments, storage **506** includes read-only memory (ROM). Where appropriate, this ROM may be mask-programmed ROM, programmable ROM (PROM), erasable PROM (EPROM), electrically erasable PROM (EEPROM), electrically alterable ROM (EAROM), or flash memory or a combination of two or more of these. This disclosure contemplates mass storage **506** taking any suitable physical form. Storage **506** may include one or more storage control units facilitating communication between processor **502** and storage **506**, where appropriate. Where appropriate, storage **506** may include one or more storages **506**. Although this disclosure describes and illustrates particular storage, this disclosure contemplates any suitable storage.

In particular embodiments, I/O interface **508** includes hardware, software, or both providing one or more interfaces for communication between computer system **500** and one or more I/O devices. Computer system **500** may include one or more of these I/O devices, where appropriate. One or more of these I/O devices may enable communication between a person and computer system **500**. As an example and not by way of limitation, an I/O device may include a keyboard, keypad, microphone, monitor, mouse, printer, scanner, speaker, still camera, stylus, tablet, touchscreen, trackball, video camera, another suitable I/O device or a combination of two or more of these. An I/O device may include one or more sensors. This disclosure contemplates any suitable I/O devices and any suitable I/O interfaces **508** for them. Where appropriate, I/O interface **508** may include one or more device or software drivers enabling processor **502** to drive one or more of these I/O devices. I/O interface **508** may include one or more I/O interfaces **508**, where appropriate. Although this disclosure describes and illustrates a particular I/O interface, this disclosure contemplates any suitable I/O interface.

In particular embodiments, communication interface **510** includes hardware, software, or both providing one or more interfaces for communication (e.g., packet-based communication) between computer system **500** and one or more other computer systems **500** or one or more networks. As an example and not by way of limitation, communication interface **510** may include a network interface controller (NIC) or network adapter for communicating with an Ethernet or other wire-based network or a wireless NIC (WNIC) or wireless adapter for communicating with a wireless network, such as a WI-FI network. This disclosure contemplates any suitable network and any suitable communication interface **510** for it. As an example and not by way of limitation, computer system **500** may communicate with an ad hoc network, a personal area network (PAN), a local area network (LAN), a wide area network (WAN), a metropolitan area network (MAN), or one or more portions of the Internet or a combination of two or more of these. One or more portions of one or more of these networks may be wired or wireless. As an example, computer system **500** may communicate with a wireless PAN (WPAN) (e.g., a BLUETOOTH WPAN), a WI-FI network, a WI-MAX network, a cellular telephone network (e.g., a Global System for Mobile Communications (GSM) network), or other suitable wireless network or a combination of two or more of these. Computer system **500** may include any suitable communication interface **510** for any of these networks, where appropriate. Communication interface **510** may include one or more communication interfaces **510**, where appropriate. Although this disclosure describes and illustrates a particular communication interface, this disclosure contemplates any suitable communication interface.

In particular embodiments, bus **512** includes hardware, software, or both coupling components of computer system **500** to each other. As an example and not by way of limitation, bus **512** may include an Accelerated Graphics Port (AGP) or other graphics bus, an Enhanced Industry Standard Architecture (EISA) bus, a front-side bus (FSB), a HYPERTRANSPORT (HT) interconnect, an Industry Standard Architecture (ISA) bus, an INFINIBAND interconnect, a low-pin-count (LPC) bus, a memory bus, a Micro Channel Architecture (MCA) bus, a Peripheral Component Interconnect (PCI) bus, a PCI-Express (PCI-X) bus, a serial advanced technology attachment (SATA) bus, a Video Electronics Standards Association local (VLB) bus, or another suitable bus or a combination of two or more of these. Bus **512** may include one or more buses **512**, where appropriate. Although this disclosure describes and illustrates a particular bus, this disclosure contemplates any suitable bus or interconnect.

Herein, reference to a computer-readable storage medium encompasses one or more tangible computer-readable storage media possessing structure. As an example and not by way of limitation, a computer-readable storage medium may include a semiconductor-based or other integrated circuit (IC) (such, as for example, a field-programmable gate array (FPGA) or an application-specific IC (ASIC)), a hard disk, an HDD, a hybrid hard drive (HHD), an optical disc, an optical disc drive (ODD), a magneto-optical disc, a magneto-optical drive, a floppy disk, a floppy disk drive (FDD), magnetic tape, a holographic storage medium, a solid-state drive (SSD), a RAM-drive, a SECURE DIGITAL card, a SECURE DIGITAL drive, or another suitable computer-readable storage medium or a combination of two or more of these, where appropriate. Herein, reference to a computer-readable storage medium excludes any medium that is not eligible for patent protection under 35 U.S.C. §101. Herein, reference to a computer-readable storage medium excludes transitory forms of signal transmission (such as a propagating electrical or electromagnetic signal per se) to the extent that they are not eligible for patent protection under 35 U.S.C. §101.

This disclosure contemplates one or more computer-readable storage media implementing any suitable storage. In particular embodiments, a computer-readable storage medium implements one or more portions of processor **502** (e.g., one or more internal registers or caches), one or more portions of memory **504**, one or more portions of storage **506**, or a combination of these, where appropriate. In particular embodiments, a computer-readable storage medium implements RAM or ROM. In particular embodiments, a computer-readable storage medium implements volatile or persistent memory. In particular embodiments, one or more computer-readable storage media embody software. Herein, reference to software may encompass one or more applications, bytecode, one or more computer programs, one or more executables, one or more instructions, logic, machine code, one or more scripts, or source code, and vice versa, where appropriate. In particular embodiments, software includes one or more application programming interfaces (APIs). This disclosure contemplates any suitable software written or otherwise expressed in any suitable programming language or combination of programming languages. In particular embodiments, software is expressed as source code or object code. In particular embodiments, software is expressed in a higher-level programming language, such as, for example, C, Perl, or a suitable extension thereof. In particular embodiments, software is expressed in a lower-level programming language, such as assembly language (or machine code). In particular embodiments, software is expressed in JAVA. In particular embodiments, software is expressed in Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML), Extensible Markup Language (XML), or other suitable markup language.

The components of system **100** and **500** may be integrated or separated. In some embodiments, components of system **100** and **500** may each be housed within a single chassis. The operations of system **100** and **500** may be performed by more, fewer, or other components. Additionally, operations of system **100** and **500** may be performed using any suitable logic that may comprise software, hardware, other logic, or any suitable combination of the preceding.

Herein, reference to a computer-readable storage medium encompasses one or more non-transitory, tangible computer-readable storage media possessing structure. As an example and not by way of limitation, a computer-readable storage medium may include a semiconductor-based or other integrated circuit (IC) (such, as for example, a field-programmable gate array (FPGA) or an application-specific IC (ASIC)), a hard disk, an HDD, a hybrid hard drive (HHD), an optical disc, an optical disc drive (ODD), a magneto-optical disc, a magneto-optical drive, a floppy disk, a floppy disk drive (FDD), magnetic tape, a holographic storage medium, a SSD, a RAM-drive, a SECURE DIGITAL card, a SECURE DIGITAL drive, or another suitable computer-readable storage medium or a combination of two or more of these, where appropriate. A computer-readable non-transitory storage medium may be volatile, non-volatile, or a combination of volatile and non-volatile, where appropriate.

Herein, "or" is inclusive and not exclusive, unless expressly indicated otherwise or indicated otherwise by context. Therefore, herein, "A or B" means "A, B, or both," unless expressly indicated otherwise or indicated otherwise by context. Moreover, "and" is both joint and several, unless expressly indicated otherwise or indicated otherwise by context. Therefore, herein, "A and B" means "A and B, jointly or severally," unless expressly indicated otherwise or indicated otherwise by context.

Herein, reference to a "primary egress PE" may refer to an IBGP peer that can reach a protected prefix P/p through an external path and advertises the prefix to the other IBGP peers. The primary egress PE may be chosen as the best path by one or more internal peers. In other words, the primary egress PE is an egress PE that will normally be used by some ingress PEs when there is no failure. Referring to FIG. **1** as an example, PE router **120*a*** may be a primary egress PE.

Herein, reference to a "primary next-hop" may refer to an IPv4 or IPv6 host address belonging to a primary egress PE. If the prefix is advertised via BGP, the primary next-hop may be the next-hop attribute in the BGP update message.

Herein, reference to a "repair egress PE" may refer to an egress PE router other than the primary egress PE router that can reach the protected prefix P/p through an external neighbor. The repair PE is pre-calculated via other PEs prior to any failure. Referring to FIG. **1**, PE router **120*b*** is the repair PE for 10.0.0.0/8 while PE router **120*c*** is the repair PE for 20.0.0.0/8.

Herein, reference to a "repair path" refers to the repair egress PE. If the protected prefix is a labeled prefix, the repair path may be the repair egress PE together with the label that will be pushed when the repairing core router reroutes traffic to the repair PE.

This disclosure encompasses all changes, substitutions, variations, alterations, and modifications to the example embodiments herein that a person having ordinary skill in the art would comprehend. Similarly, where appropriate, the appended claims encompass all changes, substitutions, variations, alterations, and modifications to the example embodiments herein that a person having ordinary skill in the art would comprehend. Moreover, reference in the appended claims to an apparatus or system or a component of an apparatus or system being adapted to, arranged to, capable of, configured to, enabled to, operable to, or operative to perform a particular function encompasses that apparatus, system, component, whether or not it or that particular function is activated, turned on, or unlocked, as long as that apparatus, system, or component is so adapted, arranged, capable, configured, enabled, operable, or operative.

What is claimed is:

1. A network device comprising:

one or more communication interfaces; and

one or more processing devices operable to:

determine a plurality of prefixes that are reachable by the network device, each prefix indicating a range of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses;

group the plurality of prefixes into one or more groups, wherein:

each group is associated with a particular router of a plurality of routers; and

the prefixes in each particular group are reachable by both the network device and the particular router associated with the particular group; and

communicate instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable.

2. The network device of claim **1**, wherein the instructions are communicated using Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) protocol.

3. The network device of claim 1, wherein the network device and the plurality of routers are edge routers.

4. The network device of claim 1, wherein the instructions are communicated to a core router.

5. The network device of claim 4, wherein the core router is a BGP-free router.

6. The network device of claim 1, wherein communicating instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable comprises advertising a primary next-hop for the one or more prefixes.

7. The network device of claim 6, wherein communicating instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable further comprises advertising a repair next-hop for the one or more prefixes.

8. The network device of claim 7, wherein communicating instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable further comprises advertising a repair label to be inserted into the data packets if the network device becomes unreachable.

9. The network device of claim 1, wherein the instructions are communicated before the network device becomes unreachable.

10. The network device of claim 1, wherein the instructions are communicated by the network device to a core router using a communications protocol other than BGP.

11. One or more computer-readable non-transitory storage media embodying software this is operable when executed by one or more processors to:

- determine a plurality of prefixes that are reachable by a network device, each prefix indicating a range of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses;
- group the plurality of prefixes into one or more groups, wherein:
  - each group is associated with a particular router of a plurality of routers; and
  - the prefixes in each particular group are reachable by both the network device and the particular router associated with the particular group; and
- communicate instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable.

12. The media of claim 11, wherein the software is operable to communicate with other network devices using Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) protocol.

13. The media of claim 11, wherein the network device and the plurality of routers are edge routers.

14. The media of claim 11, wherein the instructions are communicated to a core router.

15. The media of claim 14, wherein the core router is a BGP-free router.

16. The media of claim 14, wherein the instructions are communicated before the network device becomes unreachable.

17. The media of claim 14, wherein the instructions are communicated by the network device to a core router using a communications protocol other than BGP.

18. The media of claim 11, wherein communicating instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable comprises:

- advertising a primary next-hop for the one or more prefixes; and
- advertising a repair next-hop for the one or more prefixes.

19. The media of claim 18, wherein communicating instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable further comprises advertising a repair label to be inserted into the data packets if the network device becomes unreachable.

20. A system comprising:

- a means for determining a plurality of prefixes that are reachable by a network device, each prefix indicating a range of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses;
- a means for grouping the plurality of prefixes into one or more groups, wherein:
  - each group is associated with a particular router; and
  - the prefixes in each particular group are reachable by both the network device and the particular router associated with the particular group; and
- a means for communicating instructions to send data packets associated with the prefixes in each particular group to the particular router associated with the particular group if the network device becomes unreachable.

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